

The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 1

Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added

Chapter X.—The Small “Cents” Stamps.

In the *American Journal of Philately* for August, 1869, we read “Canada is shortly to have a new set of stamps. Taking lessons in economy from our own country, it seems they are about altering their stamps to make them smaller, so as to save paper. The head will still remain exactly the same as now, but the frame and the margin around the head will be considerably less. We cannot see how this can be done without spoiling the beauty of the stamp. As to whether they are to retain the same colors we are unable to say.”

The 1869 issue of the United States was in use at that time and though this series is now generally popular it was regarded with very mixed feelings then as may be imagined from the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* comments on the above statement, viz.:—“We trust this intelligence is incorrect; that the example of the new United States stamps can have any attractive influence on the Canadian authorities is hardly possible.”

The new issues do not seem to have formed the subject of any special official document or notice, nor does the reduction in the size of the labels seem to have been considered worthy of special mention in any of the Reports issued by the Postmaster-General.

These smaller sized stamps were issued as the stocks of the earlier issues became exhausted or, in some cases, presumably as the old plates were discarded owing to wear, but it appears very probable that the dies for the 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 6¢ and 10¢ denominations were all engraved at the same period and, as regards the 2¢, 6¢ and 10¢, it is very possible that supplies were printed and held in stock long before it became necessary to issue them to the public.

The 3¢ was the first value to appear and was probably on sale some time in January, 1870. The *Stamp Collector's Magazine* for March 1st of that year chronicled this new stamp as follows:—



Scott 37

the inscription, C A N A D A POSTAGE, is in almost microscopic lettering, and in lieu of the full denomination—THREE CENTS—in the lower margin,

the word CENTS alone appears, flanked by the figure on each side. The cause of the change is not to be sought in any desire to economise paper; it lies in the simple fact that the smaller size is found the more convenient. The design certainly is not improved by it, and we might call upon these little stamps to “hide their diminished heads,” were it not that the head, and that alone, remains as large as ever. The stamps, though in a fair way to become small by degrees as the Canadian idea of convenience increases, are not likely to become “beautifully less.”

It appears that the reduction in the size of the Dominion postage stamps, to which reference was made some months ago, is really to be carried out, and as an earnest of the execution of the project, we receive the three cents red, cut down to the size of the half cent, and with the design made to resemble that of the latter. The numerals in the upper corners are absent;



The 3¢ dull red (Sc. 37), tied by Brantford, Ont. duplex cancel on an advertising cover for animal breeder G.H. Pugsley featuring two pug dogs,

The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 2

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Chapter X.—The Small “Cents” Stamps, Cont.

After the 3¢ the next value to appear was the 1 cent, which was recorded in the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* in its issue for April 1st, so that it was no doubt on sale some time in March, 1869. In design it is similar to the 3¢, the main difference being in the inscription at base. The denomination is given in full—ONE CENT—and this follows the curve of the medallion instead of curving in the reverse direction as CENTS does on the 3¢.



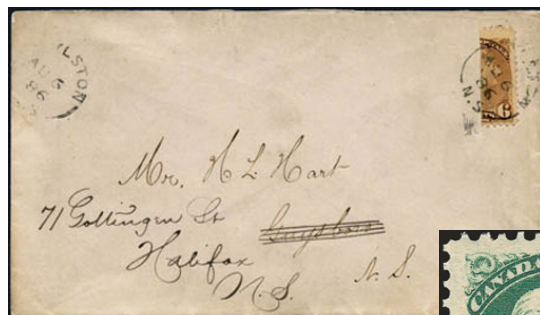
Sc. 35

Evidently there were large stocks on hand of some of the values of the 1868 issue for two years elapsed before any more of the small stamps appeared. Then in the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* for February, 1872, we read:—“We have received by the last mail specimens of a new 6 cents brown of the small size. It is printed of a warm tint, and is as effective as its congeners.” The design follows that of the 3¢ very closely with, of course, the numerals “6” instead of “3” in the lower angles.



Sc. 39

Above, 1872 6¢ yellow brown (Sc. 39) on a cover to the U.S., tied by Ottawa Maltese Cross cork cancels, with a FE 17 73 circular date stamp at the lower left, also with a private advertising handstamp in blue. Below, 1872 6¢ bisect (Sc. 39a) tied to a forwarded cover by a Boylston, N.S. Aug 6, 1886 circular date stamp, paying the 3¢ rate to Guysboro, NS, forwarded to Halifax without a further charge.



Sc. 36

In the following month the 2¢ was chronicled, its color being given as “a delicate chrome-green.” The design differs from the 3¢ and 6¢ chiefly in the direction of the curve of the word CENTS, which is reversed, as compared with those denominations, and much less pronounced.



Sc. 40

The 10¢ was the next value to appear and it was not on sale until quite late in 1874, probably about November 1st. The design follows the general effect of the 2¢ but at the same time illustrates a new departure, inasmuch as the numerals of value are repeated in the upper corners in a smaller form. For what particular purpose this value was intended is not clear for there was, apparently, no regular rate at that time which required such a denomination.



Sc. 38

Early use of 5¢ (Sc. 38) in a single franking

from Toronto AU 1 1876 to Stratford to pay the domestic plus Registration rate before the availability of registration stamps.



1876 5¢ slate green (Sc. 38) on cover to “Island of Jersey,” tied by cork cancel, with Paspébiac, Que. FE 16 86 circular date stamp (left of Island), also with Jersey MR 3 86 receiving cancel on reverse.



the other values the frame is of a distinctly different style and CENTS is in much larger letters than before, showing that the previous values, following as they do a general pattern, were engraved much about the same time though many years elapsed before all were actually in use.

Finally in July, 1882, the 1/2¢ value appeared and was recorded in the *Philatelic Record* for July of that year in the following words:—

That “history repeats itself” is a proverb that is curiously illustrated by the latest issue of this colony. We all remember that in 1868 a 1/2¢ stamp of smaller size than the other values of the



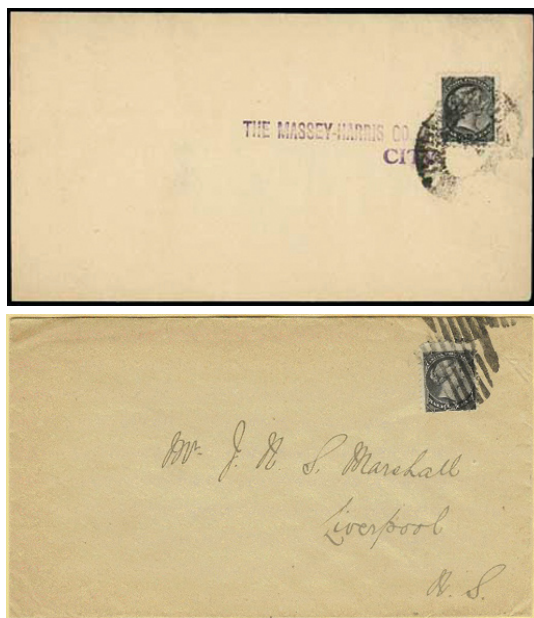
Sc. 34

series was emitted. A few years later, some say for economical reasons, the other values were reduced to the smaller size. Recently it seems to have struck the Canadian authorities that their idea of fourteen years ago was a happy one, and the 1/2¢ has been proportionately cut down. The general arrangements of the design remain the same, but the ornamentation is simpler. The head and circle containing it are miniatures

of the former, and the result is what the ladies would call “a dear little stamp,” about the size of our lately defunct “Halfpenny,” but an upright instead of an oblong rectangle. We trust the price of paper will

Top, 1882
1/2¢ black
(Sc. 34) tied
by Toronto
double oval

cancel on locally addressed wrapper, scarce single 1/2¢ circular rate;
bottom, 1/2¢ tied by grid cancels, paying the unsealed envelope rate
in Liverpool, Nova Scotia.



not again cause a general reduction; for if the Canadian stamps go on growing “small by degrees, and beautifully less,” they will in time become too microscopic to be collectible.

After the issue of the 1/2¢ value the only denominations of the 1868 series not provided with successors in the issue under notice were the 12-1/2¢ and 15¢. Regarding the former value the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* for May, 1872, says, on the authority of a Canadian journal:—“It is unlikely that the 12-1/2¢ small size will be issued, as the large ones are very little used, and can now be bought at the post-office for 12 cents.” But some three years later the *American Journal of Philately* asserted that “Canada will shortly issue the 12-1/2¢ and 15¢ values of postals in small size, to correspond with the others of the series.” These stamps, however, never materialised though that dies and plates were made and stamps printed from them is evident from the existence of perforated essays of these two values. The portrait is exactly like that of the other denominations, and the borders are, on general lines, so like the 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 6¢ and 10¢ as to give considerable support to the belief that these unissued varieties were prepared for use at quite an early date.

The stamps of this series were all produced by the line-engraved process and all values, with the exception of the 1/2¢, were at first printed in sheets of 100, arranged in ten horizontal rows of ten. The 1/2¢ was printed in sheets of 200, arranged in two panes of 100 each, placed side by side. A space of about 11 mm. separated the two panels and these large sheets were cut into halves before leaving the printing establishment, thus making “post-office” sheets of 100 stamps. In the later months of 1892 or early in 1893 the 1¢, 2¢ and 3¢ values—the ones in most general demand—were printed in large sheets of 200 arranged in ten horizontal rows of twenty stamps each.

The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 3

Based on a Mekeel's Weekly Publication by B. W. H. Poole, with images added

Chapter X.—The Small “Cents” Stamps, Cont.

Finally in July, 1882, the 1/2¢ value appeared and was recorded in the *Philatelic Record* for July of that year in the following words:—



Sc. 34

“History repeats itself” is a proverb that is curiously illustrated by the latest issue of this colony. We all remember that in 1868 a 1/2¢ stamp of smaller size than the other values of the series was emitted. A few years later, some say for economical reasons, the other values were reduced to the smaller size. Recently it seems to have struck the Canadian authorities that their idea of fourteen years ago was a happy one, and the 1/2¢ has been proportionately cut

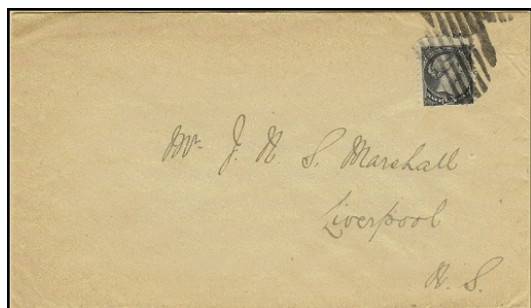
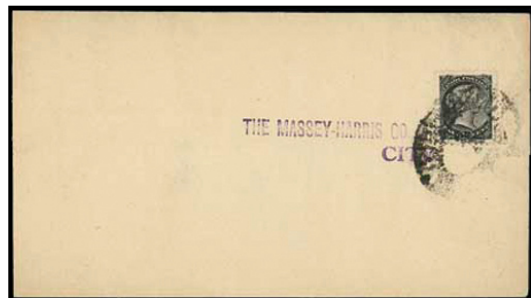
down. The general arrangements of the design remain the same, but the ornamentation is simpler. The head and circle containing it are miniatures of the former, and the result is what the ladies would call “a dear little stamp,” about the size of our lately defunct “Halfpenny,” but an upright instead of an oblong rectangle. We trust the price of paper will not again cause a general reduction; for if the Canadian stamps go on growing “small by degrees, and beautifully less,” they will in time become too microscopic to be collectible.

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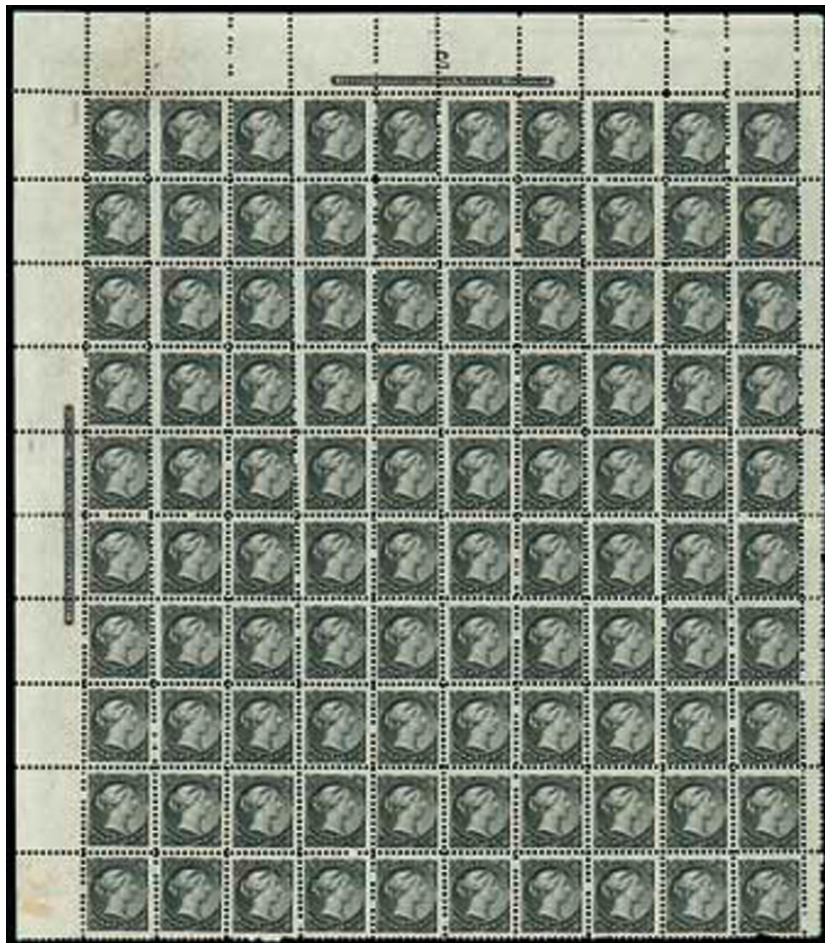
To Be Continued

Left pane of 100 of the 1/2¢, Scott 34, with bottom selvage removed



Top, 1882 1/2¢ black (Sc. 34) tied by Toronto double oval cancel on locally addressed wrapper, scarce single 1/2¢ circular cancel; bottom, 1/2¢ tied by grid cancels, paying the unsealed envelope rate in Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

After the issue of the 1/2¢ value the only denominations of the 1868 series not provided with successors in the issue under notice were the 12-1/2¢ and 15¢. Regarding the former value the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* for May, 1872, says, on the authority of a Canadian journal:—“It is unlikely that the 12-1/2¢ small size will be issued, as the large ones are very little used, and can now be bought at the post-office for 12 cents.” But



The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 4

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Chapter X.—The Small “Cents” Stamps, Cont.

A close study of a large quantity of these stamps would probably result in the discovery of many interesting varieties in the way of double transfers. In the few stamps at our disposal we have found but one of any prominence. This occurs on the 3¢ denomination the top portion of the design having plainly been applied to the plate twice, the doubling being especially noticeable in the inscription CANADA POSTAGE.

As these stamps were in use for a fairly lengthy period—nearly thirty years in the case of the 3¢—it is obvious that a large number of plates must have been made, especially for those denominations which were generally used. At different times different marginal imprints or arrangements of the imprints were used, and given

sufficient material a study of these marginal varieties should reveal much of interest. Mr. Howes has paid particular attention to these varieties and the following notes are chiefly based on his investigations.

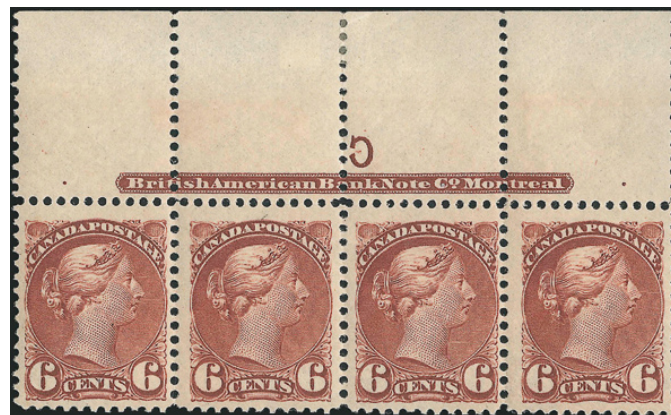


Scott 35 with “One Cent” Imprint

The earliest plates of the 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 5¢ and 6¢, and probably the 10¢ as well (as this value was in use before the 5¢), had the denomination in words above the second and third stamps on the top row of each sheet. These inscriptions, “ONE CENT”, etc., were in large shaded Roman capitals 4 mm. high. In the centre of each of the four margins is the manufacturer’s imprint, BRITISH AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO. MONTREAL



1¢ yellow (Sc. 35). Top “British American Bank Note Co. Montreal” imprint and inverted “S 2” margin strip of four.



6¢ red brown (Sc. 43). Top “British American Bank Note Co. Montreal” imprint and inverted “C” margin strip of four.

on the sheets of the large 5¢ stamp, i.e. “British American Bank Note Co. Montreal”, in capitals and lower case letters on a strip of solid color 56 mm. long by 2-1/2 mm. wide, with a pearled border. This imprint was shown on each of the four margins.

About this time new plates made for the other denominations also had this new style of imprint. Sheets of the 1¢ and 3¢ show the imprint on top and bottom margins only, but whether other plates were used for these denominations with imprints on all four sides is not known for certain, though this is highly probable. The 6¢ and 10¢ values of this series have large numerals, “6” or “10” as the case may be, above the second stamp in the top row, while above the ninth stamp of the same row is “SIX” or “TEN” in shaded Roman capitals. The numerals are very thick and 6 mm. in height, while the letters are 4 mm. high as on the earlier plates, though the word “CENTS” has now been dispensed with. This arrangement has not been noted on other denominations as yet, though there is no reason why it should not be found in connection with the 1¢, 2¢ and 3¢.

A sheet of the 3¢ value, with two marginal imprints, is noted with “THREE” in shaded Roman capitals above the first two stamps of the top row, while the 1¢ is recorded without any marginal designation of value and with but two of the “Montreal” imprints.



6¢ Red Brown (43). Top margin reversed “R”, large capitals “Six Cents”, “A” and partial “British American Bank Note Co. Montreal & Ottawa” imprint strip of six, original gum, Pos. 3-6

& OTTAWA, in colorless Roman capitals on a narrow strip of color 1 mm. wide and 51 mm. long; this imprint being, in fact, exactly like that found on the sheets of the 1868 issue. These remarks apply to the 1¢, 2¢, 3¢ and 6¢ (and probably to the 10¢ also), but not to the 5¢.

The 5¢, which was not issued until 1876, has the denomination shown in the upper margin in large shaded Roman capitals, as in the case of the others, but the imprint is different, being like that found

The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 5

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1870 1¢ orange, Ottawa printing (Sc. 35a variety) with "British American Bank Note Co. Ottawa" imprint

The printing establishment of the British American Bank Note Company was removed from Montreal to Ottawa in 1888 and plates made after that date show a new style of imprint viz:—"BRITISH AMERICAN BANK NOTE CO. OTTAWA", in white Roman capitals on a strip of solid color measuring 40 mm. long by 1-1/2 mm. wide. This, it will be noted, is like the first type of imprint but with the words "MONTREAL &" removed. On the 2¢ this is known 49 mm. long and nearly 2 mm. wide, this being from a sheet in the 100 arrangement. The smaller style of imprint seems to have been characteristic of the sheets printed in the 200 size, and writing with regard to these Mr. Howes says:—The "Ottawa" imprint appears three times, once in the middle of the top margin, over stamps 10 and 11, and twice in the bottom margin, beneath stamps 5 and 6, and again beneath stamps 15 and 16. There are no imprints at the sides.

The denomination appears in the top margin at both right and left and in a new style of lettering on these larger plates. Thus we find ONE CENT or TWO CENT over stamps 2 and 3 as well as 18 and 19, or THREE CENT over the first four and last four stamps in plain Egyptian capitals.

The 1/2¢ value, which we have left until last on account of its different sheet arrangement, had the "Montreal" imprint, described in con-



1/2¢ (Sc. 34) with "British American Bank Note Co. Montreal" top imprint and reverse "1"

nection with the other values, arranged six times on the margins—above and below each pane, at the right of the right hand pane, and at the left of the left hand pane—so that there were three imprints on each of the "post-office" sheets of 100 stamps. In addition, to quote Mr. Howes, "over the top inscription of the right pane is the reversed figure 1, 4 mm. high, and in the same position on the left pane the corresponding figure 2, evidently to designate the panes."

This series provides a number of shade-varieties, as is only natural in a set having such long currency, and their proper treatment is a matter involving some little perplexity. It was evidently the original intention of the printers to keep the colors of the small stamps as nearly like those of the large ones they superseded as possible, and while many shades match the colors of the earlier stamps to a nicety others show a divergence that at times almost approaches a "color change."

As early as May, 1873, the *Stamp Collector's Magazine* noted a change in the shade of the 3¢ viz.:—



Left, Sc. 37, orange red;

Right, bright orange vermilion Specimen, Sc. 41S



By the courtesy of a Montreal correspondent we are in possession of specimens of the current three cents, printed in bright orange-vermilion. A supply in this color has just been issued.



Sc. 45 shades: left, brown red; right, carmine red

The *Philatelic Record* for March, 1888, says "The 10¢ is now in carmine-red", and again in May that "the 5 cents has changed its color from bronze-green to greenish grey." More than a year later (July, 1889) the same journal says "the 2 cents stamp is now blue-green;" in December, 1890, the 6¢ is recorded in "chestnut-brown"; while in April, 1892, the 5¢ is chronicled as having been issued in "grey-black" (right).

Similar color changes in most values were recorded in other journals but as there is an almost total lack of agreement as regards the names chosen to designate the different shades these chronicles are of little value in determining the chronological order of issue of even the most striking of the tints. It is also more than probable that after a change had been made the original or earlier tints were reverted to later on.

To be continued



The Stamps of Canada, Chapter X, Part 6

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The catalogues are equally at variance in their choice of color names and while Gibbons' gives four shades for each of the 1¢ and 3¢ values, Scott gives but two for the 1¢ and of the four given for the 3¢ not one agrees with any of the names given by Gibbons'. The only point on which both catalogues agree is that a general change of colors took place during the period of 1888-90, i.e., after the printers had moved their establishment from Montreal to Ottawa. But though the later printings of the 6¢ and 10¢ do, undoubtedly, differ very materially from the earlier colors—almost enough so, in fact, to be classed as distinct colors—such varieties seem to have been purely accidental and to classify them as separate issues hardly seems correct. In this connection it is interesting to quote Mr. Howes' remarks:—

That the above changes were hardly of a character to warrant dignifying them as a "new issue," which is frequently done, is shown by a moment's consideration. The 1/2¢ and 1¢ stamps showed no appreciable difference in coloring and therefore caused no comment. The 2 cent did not retain its blue green shade unaltered, and the 3 cent soon reverted to its former brilliant red hue, as the *Philatelic Journal of America* for May, 1889, says that "the carmine color recently adopted has been dropped, and the stamps are printed in colors similar to the ones in use before the change was made."

The 5, 6, and 10 cent stamps, however, made permanent changes, but only such as might readily be traceable to a new mixing of the inks in the case of the first two. The 10 cent can hardly be so easily disposed of, as lake and brown-red are of quite different composition from a rose-lilac. But there can have been no official intention of altering the shades or colors or more definite and permanent changes would certainly have been made throughout the set. It remains, therefore, to classify them simply as shade varieties of the original set.

Mr. Donald A. King, in his article in the *Monthly Journal*, gives no less than eight varieties of paper for the stamps of this issue, though all resolve themselves into slight, and in many cases probably imperceptible, variations in quality and thickness of the usual "wove" paper. Mr. Howes gives a thick and thin wove and "a closely ribbed paper." This latter, like the ribbed varieties in the earlier issues, is evidently due to nothing more than some eccentricity of printing and is, consequently, of doubtful philatelic importance. The classification of the series into thick and thin papers seems to have more to be said in its favor if the statement made in Gibbons' catalogue is to be relied on. According to a footnote the stamps printed prior to 1888 (that is, in Montreal), are on a thinner paper than was used for subsequent printings. The *Philatelic Record* for October, 1893, mentions the 10¢ as being found on "fine laid paper" but this was evidently the variety more generally classified as "ribbed."

The perforation used for the stamps of this series was the usual 12—the work of single-line or guillotine machines. All values are reported to exist perforated 11-1/2 by 12, as mentioned in connection with



1874 10¢ pale milky rose lilac, perf 11-1/2 x 12 (Unitrade Sc. 40e, this color not listed in Scott)



1873 6¢ yellow brown, perf 12 (Unitrade 39b, Sc. 39)

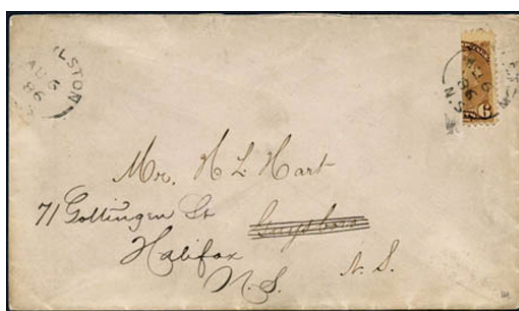
the issues of 1868, but this statement requires verification before it can be accepted as authoritative. All values are known entirely imperforate, the 3¢ in this condition being first recorded in the *Philatelic Record* for December, 1882. Writing in the *London Philatelist* in 1907 Mr. M. H. Horsley says with regard to these varieties:—"Imperforated copies of various values were sold over the Post-office counter in Montreal about the years 1891-3 at their face value, and have been good for postage whenever people cared to use them." Writing a little later on the same subject Mr. C. L. Pack also vouches for them, viz.:—"I quite agree with Mr. Horsley in regard to the various imperforate copies of the issues of 1882 to 1895. There are a good many specimens of these stamps imperforate, and they were on sale at a Canadian Post Office." Curiously enough Gibbons' catalogue entirely ignores these imperforate stamps though Mr. Howes is able to adduce documentary evidence in support of the statements made by philatelists of such undoubted authority as Messrs. Horsley and Pack.



Scott's catalogue records the 1/2¢ as existing in a horizontal pair imperforate between (left, an imperf block of four, Sc. 34a). The same work records the 2¢ bi-sected diagonally or vertically and the halves used for 1¢ stamps, while Mr. Howes adds the 6¢, cut vertically and used for 3¢. But as the "Canadian Postal Guide" declares that "a mutilated stamp, or a stamp cut in half, is not recognised in payment of postage" such freaks can

only have passed through the mails by carelessness or favor and their philatelic interest is negligible.

1872 6¢ bisect (Sc. 39) tied by a Boylston, NS Aug 6, 1886 cancel, paying the 3¢ rate to Guysboro, NS, then forwarded to Halifax without a further charge.



1873 3¢ bisect, Sc. 37 variety, tied to inter-city cover by Brenford, Ont. Jan 29, 1892 duplex cancel. paying the interim 1-1/2¢ rate in effect for 1 day only.

